

REMARKS

The specification has been reviewed, and clerical errors of the specification have been corrected.

In paragraph 1 of the Action, claims 1-3 were objected to because of the informality. In view of the objection, claims 1-3 have been amended to correct the informality.

In paragraph 3 of the Action, claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In paragraph 5 of the Action, claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101, because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. In paragraph 7 of the Action, claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Bunney et al. (US 6,446,112).

In view of the rejections, claims 1-4 and 7 have been amended to clarify the features of the invention. Claims 5 and 6 have been cancelled, and new claims 8 and 9 have been filed.

As recited in claim 1, a method of searching a participant or participants in an online game or online chatting, comprises: receiving participant search information from one of subscribers in starting the online game or online chatting on a network to which a plurality of subscribers is connected with a network server as a core; managing a channel and a relation between an ID and an IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging-in; collating attribute information concerning the subscribers stored in the server to the participant search information; selecting another of the subscribers other than the one of the subscribers corresponding to the participant search information and also currently connected to the network; distributing participant recruiting information to the another of the subscribers; and returning participation acceptance information from the another of the subscribers having accepted the recruiting information to the one of the subscribers.

In particular, the invention in claim 1 includes the step of managing the channel and the relation between the ID and the IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging-in the network. Accordingly, even when the ID address is changed, it is still possible to properly and quickly search a participant on the network.

Bunney et al. discloses an IRC name translation protocol. In Benny et al., a network comprises a server 1 and a plurality of user terminals 3. The user terminals 3 can communicate with each other through an IRC server 40. The user terminal 3 sends a message to a chat proxy 39 in the server 1, and the chat proxy 39 is connected to a session manager 23 to translate an address having more than nine characters to a code. Then, the chat proxy 39 sends the code and an IRC command to the IRC server 40, so that it is possible to communicate with the address having more than nine characters beyond the limit of the IRC server 40.

Bunney et al. discloses the features confined within the server, and there is no specific feature in the network between the server and the terminals. On the other hand, in the invention, the method includes the step of managing the channel and the relation between the ID and the IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging in the network. Accordingly, it is possible to deal with a change in the IP address of the terminal. In Bunney et al., there is no disclosure or suggestion of the step of managing the channel and the relation between the ID and the IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging-in. Therefore, Bunney et al. does not disclose or suggest the features of the invention recited in claim 1.

As recited in claim 2, a participant search device is used for an online game or online chatting performed on a network to which a network server and a plurality of network terminals are connected. The network server comprises: a subscriber attribute information storage section for storing attribute information for network subscribers; an ID storage section for storing therein IDs of the subscribers; a participant selection section for selecting at least one of the subscribers satisfying conditions specified in a request from another of the subscribers with the attribute information stored in the subscriber attribute information storage section; and a log-in monitoring section for managing a relation between an ID and an IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging-in and a channel. Each of the network terminals comprises an ID retaining section for retaining an ID assigned to the from the

network server, and an IP recording section for temporally recording therein an IP address assigned by a provider to which each of the subscribers subscribes during an online mode until an operation for switching to an offline mode is performed.

In particular, the network server of the participant search device includes the log-in monitoring section for managing the relation between the ID and the IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging-in and the channel. Accordingly, even when the ID address is changed, it is still possible to properly and quickly search a participant on the network.

As explained above, Bunney et al. discloses the features confined within the server, and there is no specific feature in the network between the server and the terminals. In Bunney et al., there is no disclosure or suggestion of the log-in monitoring section for managing the channel and the relation between the ID and the IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging-in. Therefore, Bunney et al. does not disclose or suggest the features of the invention recited in claim 2.

In claim 4, a network server has a communication server section for searching a participant or participants in an online game or online chatting. The communication server section comprises: a subscriber attribute information storage section for storing therein attribute information for network subscribers; an ID storage section for storing therein subscribers' IDs; a participant selection section for selecting at least one of the subscribers with the attribute information having been stored in the subscriber attribute information storage section in response to a demand from another of the subscribers; and a log-in monitoring section for managing a relation between an ID and an IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging-in and a channel.

In claim 7, a computer program for a network server is embedded in a computer readable medium for searching a participant or participants in an online game or online chatting. The computer program comprises the steps of: managing a channel and a relation between an ID and an IP address of all of subscribers currently logging-in; receiving participant search information from one of

the subscribers connected to a network; collating the participant search information to attribute information for the network subscribers stored in the server and selecting another of the subscribers currently connected to the network; distributing participant recruiting information to the another of the subscribers; and returning participation acceptance information for the another of the subscribers having accepted the recruiting information to the one of the subscribers.

As explained above, Bunney et al. discloses the features confined within the server, and there is no specific feature in the network between the server and the terminals. In Bunney et al., there is no disclosure or suggestion of the step of managing the channel and the relation between the ID and the IP address of all of the subscribers currently logging-in. Therefore, Bunney et al. does not disclose or suggest the features of the invention recited in claim 4 or 7.


As explained above, the cited reference does not disclose or suggest the features of the invention.

Reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Two month extension of time is hereby requested. A credit card authorization form in the amount of \$225.00 for a small entity is attached herewith for the two month extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

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